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THE MUSLIM SUNRISE

The Muslim Sunrise is a quarterly magazine, founded in 1921 by Dr. Mufti Muhammad Sadiq, the first Muslim missionary in the U.S.A. The magazine is an organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, founded by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India (1835–1908). The Movement is currently headed by Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad – third successor – with Headquarters at Rabwah, Pakistan. The Movement aims at presenting to the world the true meaning and teaching of Islam. The American Headquarters of the Movement are located at:

The Fazl Mosque
2141 Leroy Place, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008

Editor:	Khalil Ahmad Nasir, Ph.D.
Consulting Editor	Imam Ata Ullah Kaleem

All correspondence in regards to the subject matter or contents of the *Muslim Sunrise* may be directly addressed to: Dr. Khalil A. Nasir, 30 Sommerset Place, Syosset, L.I., N.Y. 11791

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EDITORIAL

BOUNTIES OF THE OCEAN: A NEW CHALLENGE FOR MANKIND

As the population of our universe continues to rise, the problems of its survival and sustenance are also posing a new and awesome challenge. New sources of food have to be discovered and exploited. The production of food from existing land has to be increased radically. More and more, hitherto virgin lands have to be brought under cultivation to provide additional food for many millions of hungry and starving people, many more millions living only on marginal standards.

The new realities have forced the modern world to look into the resources of the waters of the world more systematically as well as more extensively. This, of course, entails settlement of many complicated issues within the family of nations. Without an adequate system of apportionment of these resources, mankind would face chaos and perhaps a global disaster.

For the last several decades, statesmen and other thinking people have been involved in deliberations toward the solution of this complex problem. A little more than 10 years ago, it was Ambassador Arvid Bardo of Malta who asked formally for the first time that the United Nations General Assembly take quick action to prevent chaos in the seas. It is not fully realized that about 70 percent of the world we live in is ocean. Yet we know far less about what lies in the depths of the seas than we do about what is on the surface of the moon. In the last decade, the United Nations has held a series of Laws of the Seas conferences in different parts of the world, in order to develop a system of the distribution of the riches of the ocean satisfactory to all nations. The issues before these conferences have been simply tremendous. The family of nations not only should decide the breadth of the territorial sea, the rules of international navigation, the limits,

nature and scope of the sovereign rights of coastal states over the Continental Shelf, but also other issues in regard to the freedom of the high seas. It should also deal with the problems of special interest groups such as land-locked and shelf-locked states. It should devise a formula to equitably distribute the resources of the seabed between the industrially developed nations as well as the developing nations. Finally, it should also address itself to the problem of the cultivation of the ocean resources and protection of the life support systems of the sea.

The deliberations of the United Nations in this regard so far are certainly commendable. However, a final solution still seems to be remote and distant. Mankind must find a fundamental and universal formula acceptable to all interests which can be applied to the subsequent detailed solution. The *Minaret*, our contemporary quarterly journal published from Calicut, India, has recently drawn the attention of the world to this very formidable problem and thus made a commendable contribution.

It may be suggested that perhaps the world should look into the teachings of the major faiths to see if they have advocated any formulas helpful toward a solution of this universal problem. Islam, for example, teaches that all natural resources in the world, both of land and sea, have been created as common ownership of all mankind. They are all enjoined to share under the sovereignty of one supreme Creator, Allah, the Sustainer of all universes, all that the universe has to offer. Man is thus entrusted as a vicegerent of God on the earth to protect as well as exploit, beneficently and responsibly, all natural resources. As the Holy Qur'an, the Scripture of Islam, says:

"He it is Who sends down water for you from the clouds, from it you drink and with it grow trees on which you pasture your cattle.

"Therewith He grows for you corn, and the olive and the

datepalm and the grape, and all kinds of fruits. Surely, in that is a Sign for a people who reflect. He has constrained to your service the night and the day and the sun and the moon; and the stars too have been constrained to your service by His command. Surely in all this there are Signs for a people who make use of their understanding. In that which He has created for you in the earth of diverse types of articles, there is a Sign for people who take heed. He it is Who has constrained the sea to your service that you may eat fresh sea-food therefrom and may take out therefrom articles that you wear as ornaments. Thou seest the vessels ploughing through it that you may voyage across the oceans seeking His bounty and that you may be grateful. He has set in the earth firm mountains lest it roll beneath you, and has made rivers and tracks that you may find your way; and He has set up other marks. By these and by the stars they set their course.” (16:11-17).

In other places the Holy Quran refers particularly to the riches of the sea. It teaches that these bounties of the Creator of the universes be used for the benefit of the whole of mankind. Just to quote a few:

“Allah is He Who has subjected the sea to you that vessels may sail thereon by His command, and that you may seek of His bounty and that you may be grateful.” (45:13)

“Dost thou not see that the ships sail on the sea by the favor of Allah, that He may show you of His signs? Therein surely are Signs for everyone who is patient and grateful.” (31:32).

“The two waters are not alike? this one of the rivers and springs sweet, palatable and pleasant to drink, and the other of the sea, salt and bitter. From each you eat fresh meat and fish out articles that you wear as ornaments. Thou seest the vessels ploughing through them that you may seek of His bounty, and that you may be grateful.” (35:13)

"There come out from them pearls and coral. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny? And Ilis are the lofty ships reared aloft on the sea like mountains. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?" (55: 23-26)

And, finally:

"Call to mind also when your Lord declared: If you will use My bounties beneficently, I will surely multiply them unto you, but if you misuse them, My punishment is severe indeed." (14:8)

It should be obvious to everyone that mankind faces perhaps the most awesome challenge of its entire history. Without meeting this challenge successfully, without devising some mechanism to settle disputes and to reduce the possibility of conflict, and without ensuring the rights and obligations of all parties concerned, we may face a global calamity. On the other hand, if the community of nations can meet this problem successfully, it will certainly be a lofty and sublime achievement. We believe that Islam teaches the best and most equitable principles towards achievement of this goal. Let us hope that the world will hearken.

A PERSONAL NOTE

Readers of the *Muslim Sunrise* are already aware that the former editor of this journal, Imam M. M. Ibrahim, has been recalled to the headquarters of the Ahmadiyya Movement. He has left behind a record of extremely valuable services, extending over several years in the United States, towards the editing of the *Muslim Sunrise* as well as other related activities. We are sure that his significant contribution toward bringing about an understanding of Islam through this journal are deeply appreciated both in this country and in the Center of the Ahmadiyya Movement. We wish him a happy and productive future in the service of Islam, and extend our sincere congratulations for a job well done in regard to the *Muslim Sunrise*.

The responsibility of editing the *Muslim Sunrise* has now been placed on my shoulders. Being fully aware of my limitations, I seek divine guidance and request the earnest prayers of all those who are concerned with its aims and goals.

ONE IS THE HUMAN SPIRIT

By

Justice Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan
Former President, International Court of Justice

In the Islamic concept the unity of the human spirit derives from the Unity of the Creator of the universe. The very first chapter of the Holy Quran, the scripture of Islam, opens with the declaration:

"The worthiness of the highest praise belongs to God alone Who has created the universe and sustains and nourishes it and leads it stage by stage towards perfection." (1:2)

Jealousies and rivalries that divide the human spirit are generated by our setting up a multiplicity of gods, under varying denominations, race, color, blood, wealth, culture, standard of living etc. The unifying force must be our consciousness that every human being is a creature of the same God Who created us and that his welfare is as dear to Him as our own. It is our relationship through Him that brings about unity and fosters a spirit of brotherhood. Everything else is divisive and unless it is controlled and regulated by that consciousness would lead to ruin.

We have been admonished: *"O mankind, be mindful of your duty to your Lord, Who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate and from the two created and spread large numbers of men and women (4.2).*

The diversity of our pursuits and interests should not impel us into situations of hostile and aggressive competition; we must regulate our relationship and seek adjustment and co-ordination through beneficent cooperation; as we have been directed:

"Assist one another in piety and rectitude and assist not one another in sin and transgression; and be mindful of your duty to God; surely God's punishment is severe (5.3).

We have been warned against hostility and division and have been urged to unite on the basis of our common allegiance to our Maker:

"Take fast hold, all together, of the rope of God, and be not divided. Call to mind the favour of God which He bestowed upon you when you were at enmity with each other and He united your hearts in love so that by His grace you became as brethren. You were on the brink of a pit of fire and He rescued you from it. Thus does God expound to you His commandments that you may be guided (3.104).

The message of Islam is universal; it is addressed to the whole of mankind. It is not confined to any particular people. Nor is any people excluded from it. The Quran affirms:

"Proclaim, O Prophet: O mankind, Verily I am God's Messenger to you all. To Him belongs the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth. There is no god but He. He bestows life and He causes death." (7:159).

There is no room here for a god who bestows life, for another who maintains it and for a third who destroys it.

The beneficence of the Prophet of Islam was not confined to a particular people. It was unequivocally announced: *We have sent thee as a mercy for the entire universe (21.108).*

On the occasion of the Pilgrimage the Holy Prophet proclaimed: There is no superiority for an Arab over a non-Arab, nor for a non-Arab over an Arab; nor is a white one to be preferred over a colored one, nor a colored one over a white one. You are all equal as brothers.

That is why in Islam there has at no time been any distinction on the basis of race, color or blood. Islam is color blind.

There is no privilege in Islam. There is no church, no church hierarchy, no ordination, no priesthood. The whole emphasis is on righteousness. That is the sole badge of

honor. The Holy Quran has announced:

“O mankind, We have created you from male and female, and We have divided you into nations and tribes for greater facility of intercourse. Verily, the most honoured among you in the sight of God is he who is the most righteous among you. Surely, God is All-Knowing, All-Aware (49.14).

The Quran recognizes that God sent His revelation to every people and that every people has had its prophet:

“Thou art but a warner; and every people has had its guide (13.8). We have sent thee with enduring truth, as a bearer of glad tidings and as a Warner. There is no people to whom a Warner has not been sent (35.25).

It goes much further and requires belief in the truth of all Prophets and all revealed books. For instance:

“Affirm: We believe in God and in that which has been sent down to us and that which was sent down to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and his children and that which was given to Moses and Jesus, and that which was given to all other Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them and to Him do we wholly submit ourselves (2.137).

And again: *The Messenger has full faith in that which has been sent down to him from his Lord and so have the believers: all of them believe in God, and in His angels and in His Books and in His Messengers, affirming: We make no distinction between any of His Messengers (2.286).*

This secures reverence for all Prophets and revealed books and promotes and fosters the unity of the human spirit.

Despite the diversity of creeds and beliefs which divides mankind Islam seeks to promote understanding and accord on the basis of a mutually acceptable fundamental. The Holy Quran lays down the directive:

“Say to the People of the Book: Let us agree upon one

matter which is the same for you and for us, that we worship none but God, and that we associate no partner with Him, and that some of us take not others for Lords beside God. Then, if they turn away, say to them: Bear Ye witness that we have submitted to God (3.65).

It is the Unity of the Godhead alone that can safeguard the unity of the human spirit.

The children of Adam who started on the Unity of the Godhead soon began to fall away from it and proceeded to fashion various types of gods and even goddesses for themselves. A whole succession of Prophets and divine Messengers were from time to time raised among them in every part of the earth to wean them away from the worship of false gods and to win them back to the worship of the One True God.

The history of man presents a panorama of this struggle between the yearning of the human spirit to reach out to the Unity of the Creator and man's tendency to sink into the worship of false deities of every description. Every falling away was inspired by or imported in its wake the exploitation of man by his fellow man which imposed or involved a division or degradation of the human spirit.

**A GLIMPSE
INTO THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF THE
HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD**

By

Imam Ata Ullah Kaleem,
The Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, USA

Islam, which sometimes has been wrongly called Moham-madanism in the West, is perhaps the most misinterpreted and misunderstood of all the religions of the world. It has been even deliberately misrepresented by some of the biased writers. They have distorted Islam as a religion of barbarism and its holy Prophet -- Muhammad -- as a barbarous man. But the truth is altogether to the contrary. At the time of Muhammad there were many religions. Each religion was divided into sects which fought against one another. Religion was thus a cause not for peace and order but for war and anarchy. Muhammad pondered over these matters and, under the guidance of God, came to the conclusion that the business of religion was not to destroy but to construct; not to divide but to unite; not to enslave but to emancipate; not to depress and demoralize but to cheer up and elevate. He found that the best religion to which all should flock is that in which men worship One Supreme and eternal God and practised His unchangeable laws. In His sight the best man is he who does most for the true happiness of humanity. This religion of humanity Muhammad did not call Muhammadanism nor a person who professes it a Muhammadan. Muhammad was a man -- a mortal. This religion is immortal. It is Islam, and one who adheres to it is a Muslim.

Islam literally means peace; surrender of one's will; and to be in amity and concord. The significance of the name Islam is the attainment of a life of perfect peace, and eternal happiness through complete surrender to the Will of God. The Quran interprets it to be religion whose teachings are in

consonance with human nature. Islam, as the Quran has stated (5:5), is the completion of the religion inaugurated by God in the beginning of the world, on His sending the Quran through the Holy Prophet Muhammad. As a child is taught his alphabet, so God taught the religion of the world gradually and little by little, by sending, at different times, and to different peoples, His prophets to teach His religion. When the world had reached that stage of understanding when it was ready for the complete teachings, He sent the last complete Book through Muhammad which not only corrects the errors which had found their way into various religions, but preaches the truths which have not been preached before, on account of special circumstances of society or the early stage of its development and at the same time it gathers together in itself the truths which were contained in any Divine Revelation granted to any people for the guidance of men (Al-Quran 98.2) and lastly it meets all the spiritual and moral requirements of an every advancing humanity.

There is an important point which must be cleared before stating anything about the life and teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, that of the functions of a Prophet. The functions of a Prophet are twofold: (a) To receive Divine guidance through revelation and to communicate it to the people. (b) To illustrate in his own life and character how a righteous life may be lived in accordance with the teachings he propounds. It is necessary therefore that a Prophet must be a human being like the rest of us. If he is God, or an Angel, or superhuman, he cannot serve as an ideal for men. In such a case it will always be said that we cannot live as he lived, for we have not his superhuman strength and capacity. So Muhammad was a human being like the rest of mankind. He laid no claim to a superhuman status or superhuman capacities.

Nearly fourteen hundred years ago, the Holy Prophet Muhammad was born in the city of Mecca, on Monday the

twelfth of *Rabi-ul-Awwal*, the third lunar month of the Muslim Era, corresponding to April 20th, 577 A.D. His father died before his birth, and when he was only six years old, his mother breathed her last. The orphan child Muhammad was taken by his grandfather and then by his uncle Abu Talib. There was no attempt, it seems to educate the boy in the modern sense of the word, for even when grown up we find him an illiterate man. But his untutored and uncultivated mind developed into an honest and trustworthy spirit so remarkably that he was soon known as Al-Amin, The Trustworthy, and As-Sadooq, The Truthful.

At this time he was engaged by a wealthy lady named Khadija to undertake on her behalf a commercial venture into Syria, and return for a share in the profits. The venture resulted in far larger profit than Khadija had expected. Khadija's slave also gave a full account of the purity and nobility of Muhammad's life to her mistress who was so moved that she offered her hand in marriage to Muhammad and was accepted. At this time Khadija was a widow of forty years while Muhammad was only a youth of twenty-five.

After the marriage Khadija put the whole of her wealth including her slaves at the disposal of Muhammad, who immediately set all the slaves free and thus accomplished in his youth which aged leaders had been unable to accomplish during their lifetime, viz: to strike a fatal blow at the root of slavery, in a town where the institution of slavery was the foundation of the entire social fabric, and was indispensable to its structure. The Arab race of that time was at the lowest level of degradation.

A contemplation of the ills that affected his country made Muhammad sad and he was wont to retire to a cave in mount Hira, three miles from Mecca, where he used to ponder over the condition of his country and devoted himself to the worship of One Eternal God. At the age of forty he received Divine revelation to the following effect: "Worship God and pray to Him for spiritual and intellectual advancement and

for the acquisition of such learning as has not previously been revealed to mankind." Being only a mortal, he was rather overawed and returned in haste to his wife, trembling all over with excitement. She encouraged him and comforted him saying: "Nay, God will surely not try thee, for thou dost behave kindly towards the relatives, dost assist the helpless, dost exhibit the most excellent moral qualities, dost entertain the guest hospitably and dost help those who have been overtaken by misfortune." This was the testimony of the woman who was his wife and was, therefore, familiar with the minutest details of his life. A man can, to a point, hide his true character from the world at large, but this he cannot do in his own home.

From that time onward the Divine revelation would come to him every now and then right up to the end of his mission and these are faithfully recorded in the Holy Quran about which Davenport says: "The Quran is the general code of the Muslim world; a social, civil, commercial, military, judicial, criminal, penal, and yet religious code: by it, every thing is regulated; from the ceremonies of religion to those of daily life; from the salvation of the soul to the health of the body; from the rights of the general community to those of society, from morality to crime, from punishment here to that of the life to come."

Muhammad was commanded to call mankind to God, to abolish all kinds of polytheism, to suppress evil and to establish righteousness. Persecution quickly followed the opening of his preaching. But he refused to be silenced. "If they brought me" he said, "the sun to my right hand and the moon to my left to force me from my mission, I would not leave it till the Lord had made my cause good or till I perish." Once the pagans of Mecca devised a plan for enticing the Prophet. They sent a representative named Utba, a Meccan chief, who addressed the Prophet in the following words: "O, Muhammad, if you want to sit on the throne of Arabia, we shall elect you our monarch, if you want money, we shall

give you no end of it, and if you desire the hand of a beautiful woman, we are ready to present you with the most beautiful lady in the land." The Prophet was far above any worldly temptations. In reply, he recited certain verses of the Holy Quran in which the glory and unity of God were proclaimed and claim of the Prophet as the true Apostle of God was set forth.

In spite of the tyrannies of the enemy to which he and the small band of his followers were subjected, he continued to declare his mission and deliver guidance, until the Meccans plotted to kill him at night. But God warned him of the conspiracy and he left his home and took refuge in Medina, a town about two hundred and seventy miles north of Mecca. Even here he was not left in peace. His enemies organized expedition after expedition to put an end to him and his companions by violence and force of arms. He was thus compelled to fight in defence of the right of all men to worship God according to their own lights. A remarkable feature of these battles was that they were fought in or around Medina, a fact which amply shows that it were the pagans who came to attack the Muslims and that the latter were always on the defensive. Impartial and objective statements of historians stress the point that the idea that Muhammad has waged wars on his opponents for the sake of effecting their conversion is utterly baseless. The well-known writer Thomas Carlyle refutes this in his work, *Heroes and Hero Worship*, in a convincing manner. True, there were times when some Muslim rulers did wage wars for their political ends, but they had as little to do with Muhammad as the 20th century Christians with a record of two world wars have to do with Christ.

Muhammad's wife Ayesha, when questioned about the Prophet's morals and manners says: "The morals of the Holy Quran were the morals of the Holy Prophet." It means he lived up to the teachings of the Quran, faithfully carrying out what the Quran commanded and abstaining from that which

it prohibited. Only such a life can serve as an example for the followers. If he brought a perfect teaching which was valid for all times, ought he not have passed through all the destinies of life? Thus he was born an orphan, brought up by relatives, he experienced poverty and need, he married, he was husband, father, uncle, grandfather, salesman, employee, soldier, judge, general, sovereign and a prophet. Combining in his person the highest spiritual and temporal office, the Prophet set a high example of forgiveness, humility, co-operation, courage and all other lofty morals. Here is an example of his forgiveness.

After some years Muhammad returned to Mecca, this time as a master and ruler, without the least bloodshed. The time of reckoning for the opponents had come, the time of reckoning for those sworn enemies who had made life for the Prophet and his followers bitter for decades, the hour of reckoning for those who tied Muslim women to two camels and then drove the animals in opposite directions, the hour of reckoning for those who had laid the helpless Muslims on burning sand under the scorching sun and then dragged them upon hot stones. When the Prophet asked the opponents what award did they expect for their conduct, "Mercy, O generous brother and nephew" they besought him. Tears came into the eyes of the Prophet when he heard them. "I will speak to you", he continued, "as Joseph spoke to his brethren. I will not reproach you today; God will forgive you for He is Merciful and Loving. Go, ye are free." The blood-thirsty enemy was pardoned all at a time, too, when the Holy Prophet had full power over life and death for him. That was indeed a spectacle of unparalleled effect in history, and it is impossible to quote a nobler and higher example of forgiveness and neighbourly love.

Now let us see the teachings propounded and the reformations wrought by the Holy Prophet Muhammad who has been truly called by a German scholar, Noldecke, as the "Most successful of all Prophets and religious personalities."

There are five pillars of Islam: Declaration of faith in Oneness of God and in the Divine Messengership of Muhammad; Fixed daily prayers; Fasting in the month of Ramadhan; Fixed alms-giving and charity; Pilgrimage once in one's life time to the Holy Shrine at Mecca, provided circumstances allow. Faith without action is a dead letter. Faith by itself is insufficient, unless translated into action. A Muslim believes in his own personal accountability for his burden and none can expiate for another's sin. (Al-Quran 53: 39-42). According to Islam the object of man's life is its complete unfolding. Islam does not support the idea that man is born in sin. It teaches that everyone has within him the seed of perfect development, and it rests solely with himself to make or mar his fortune. "We created man in the best make" says the Holy Quran (98.4).

Unity of God. The most important function of religion is to furnish humanity with the true conception of the Divine Being and help man to find the Living God in his manifold relationship with Him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad accomplished this great task with supreme success. He expounded the absolute Oneness of God and emphasized the fact that the Author of the universe is free from all defects, faults and frailties. He is above all physical limitations and material needs. Muhammad did not tolerate any partner with the Divine Being. His are the most sublime and perfect attributes, and the attribute of mercy embraces and surpasses all other attributes of God. According to the Prophet it is offering an insult to God to imagine that God incarnates Himself in man or idols, or that He begets or is begotten. The Holy Prophet gave the remarkable creed to his followers: "There is none worthy of worship but God, and Muhammad is a Messenger of God." Thus he took every precaution that he himself might not be deified after his death. This doctrine underlines the Unity of God and also draws a line between the human and the Divine. The Prophet shall never be regarded as super-human. He may never be worshiped. A Muslim is

exhorted to pray for the Prophet and not to the prophet. In his prayer for the Prophet the Muslim invokes the unlimited blessings of God for the Prophet. As for his success in establishing the Unity of God, it is well explained by Gibbon. He says: "The first principle of reason and revelation was confirmed by the voice of Muhammad; his proselytes, from India to Morocco, 'are distinguished by the name of Unitarians, and the danger of idolatry has been prevented by the interdiction of images."

Unity of All Religions. An inestimable service which the Holy Prophet rendered to the cause of world peace was to inculcate, for the first time, in the annals of mankind, the divine origins and basic unity of all religions. He propounded the sovereign truth that God, out of His infinite mercy, sent his messengers and prophets in all ages and to all lands and nations. All these spiritual reformers and divine guides came with one and the same mission, to lead this benighted humanity out of darkness into light, and to help them win success in the supreme purpose of life, culminating in the realization of God. The Holy Quran has expressly laid down this principle in several places. I quote the translation of one of them. "Say, (O Muslims,) we believe in God, and that we believe in the revelation that has been sent down to us, and in the revelation that was sent down to Abraham and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob and his children, and what was given to Moses and Jesus, and what was given to all other Prophets from their Lord. We make no difference between any of them and thus (accepting all the prophets) do we enter the religion of Islam resigning ourselves wholly to our Lord." (Al-Quran 2:132.) Obviously therefore, any Muslim who shows the slightest disrespect towards the founder of any other faith, he does so at the cost of his own faith. He has to utter the respectful benediction "Alaihis Salam" i.e. Peace be upon him, after mentioning the name of every prophet -- Jesus or Moses, Buddha or Zoroaster.

Equality and Universal Brotherhood. The supreme contri-

bution which the Holy Prophet of Islam made to the advancement and civilization of mankind was to create veritable universal brotherhood. He appeared in Arabia at a time when race discrimination and color prejudice loomed large in that country. It was at such a time that he brought the heavenly message of equality of all humanity. "The Arabs have no superiority over the non-Arabs, nor have the non-Arabs any superiority over the Arabs. All are the children of Adam and Adam was created of clay", declared the Holy Prophet. The most righteous among you is the most respectable among you in the sight of God". The Quran proclaimed. With his infinite spiritual dynamic, the Holy Prophet drilled into his followers the magnificent ideal of the common brotherhood of all men. The followers of Muhammad carried this message of democracy to the ends of the earth. Professor Gibbs writes in his book, *Mohammad and Mohammadanism*, that Islam "professes a magnificent tradition of inter-racial understanding and cooperation. No other society has such a record of uniting in an equality of statutes, of opportunity and of endeavor so many and so various races of mankind ... Islam has still the power to reconcile apparently irreconcilable elements of race and tradition. If ever the opposition of the great societies of the East and of the West is to be replaced by cooperation, the mediation of Islam is an indispensable condition." Professor Toynbee has also given the same kind of remarks in his *Civilization on Trial*. He says: "The extinction of race and consciousness as between Muslims is one of the outstanding moral achievements of Islam and in the contemporary world there is, as it happens, a crying need for the propagation of this Islamic virtue."

Religious Outlook. It is not wrong to say that the Holy Prophet Muhammad changed the entire religious outlook by making it possible for human beings to attain spirituality together with participation in the things of the world. Concerning celibacy and the priesthood of the *Nasara* (Christians), it is said in the Quran: "As for monasticism, they

invented it. We did not prescribe it to them — only to seek God's pleasure; but they did not observe it with due observance." The Prophet says: "Islam does not recognize monasticism." A Muslim does not have to go to a priest to unload his sins through confession before a human being and thus seek redemption. He may ask one to pray for him, but confession is made before God alone. The Prophet has introduced prayer into our daily life as part and parcel of our being.

In the Quran there is much written concerning food, clothing and the like. It says: "Say, who has prohibited the embellishment of God, which He has brought forth for His servants and the good provisions?" This means that these are the benefits of true believers in this life and that it is not forbidden for them to participate in them. Once the Prophet advised a rich Muslim to wear handsome clothes, saying: "God wishes that human beings show gratitude to Him by using the things He has given them." On the subject of marriage there are clear and simple rules in the Quran and the words of the Holy Prophet are: "To marry is to follow my example. One who avoids it is not of me." In all things the Prophet showed that spirituality does not mean just fasting and prayer, nor the renunciation of the world. He defined spirituality as the height attained by prayer and fasting, along with the discharge of worldly obligations. The Prophet said that to maintain a wife according to the decree of religion is also a good thing, and a means to attain spirituality.

Abolition of Liquor and Gambling. One can hardly exaggerate the evils of intoxicating liquor. Gladstone said: "The combined harm of three scourages — war, famine and pestilence — is not as terrible as that of wine drinking." Before the advent of the Holy Prophet, the Arabs were grossly addicted to this giant evil. The Holy Prophet put an absolute veto on the use of intoxicants. He achieved miraculous success in enforcing total abstinence among his adherents. Wherever Islam has gone, drinking has vanished. Gambling was another evil which was one of the causes of

degradation of Arabian people. The Holy Prophet's unique and unfathomed spiritual force enabled him to liberate his followers from the slavery of this great demon. Rev. Bosworth Smith says: "By absolutely prohibiting gambling and intoxicating liquor Muhammad did much to abolish, once and for all, over the vast regions that were in his sway, two of the worst and irremediable evils of European society; evils to the intensity of which the Christian governments of the nineteenth century are hardly yet beginning to awake." (*Mohammad and Mohammadanism*, p. 207).

Life After Death. According to Islam, life after death is the continuation of life on earth. Heaven and hell begin right from this life. Heaven is eternal and everlasting while hell is only temporary. Hell is as a place of surgical or medical treatment for the human soul which, as soon as it is cured, goes to heaven. Heaven is the attainment of a life of everlasting progress and complete joy and happiness through union with God and by the development of the fine spiritual qualities and the unlimited capacities that have been implanted in man. State after death is an image of the spiritual state in this life. There is no truth in the theory of reincarnation.

Liberation of Women. Before the advent of the great Arabian Prophet women suffered great injustice in all countries and under all religious systems. The Holy Prophet Muhammad appeared as the liberator and protector of the fair sex in that age when they were treated as chattel by men. He declared that he was entrusted with the special task of emancipation of women. The Holy Quran proclaimed the essential equality of both the sexes in the following words: "God created both men and women from the same essence", and by virtue of their common humanity, they were equal. Again: "Just as men have rights over women, so also women have rights over men", says the Holy Quran. "The best among you is he who is best to his wife. Paradise lies at the feet of the mother", are the sayings of Muhammad. At the times when in some countries the baby girls were burnt or

buried alive, widows were not permitted to remarry and women were forced to burn themselves when their husbands died, and in others, women were denied the right of owning property and could be disposed of at the will of men; Muhammad elevated the status of women, and in the words of Pierre Craibties: "Muhammad, thirteen hundred years ago assured to the mothers, wives and daughters of Islam the rank and dignity not yet generally assured to women by the West. For the first time in the annals of history women were accorded the right of inheritance and individual ownership of property. They were entitled to inherit their fathers, children, brothers and husbands.

The Holy Prophet exalted the intellectual and spiritual status of women.

Intellectual: "The acquisition of knowledge is a duty on Muslims, both male and female," says the Prophet. Regarding the spiritual status, the Holy Quran says: "Whoso doeth good deeds, whether male or female, and he or she is a believer; such will enter paradise and they will not be wronged in the least."

Science and Education: At the time of Muhammad's appearance on the scene of Arabia, the people of the country were submerged in gross ignorance. The whole period is designated by historians as the Dark Age. Realizing this state of affairs, the Holy Prophet instilled into them a new spirit of insatiable thirst for knowledge. He would say to his followers: "Acquire knowledge from the cradle to the grave. Acquire knowledge even if you must go to China to find it." To seek after knowledge is incumbent on both men and women. ... Teach your children as best as you can." He would often remind them of the Divine injunction: "Whosoever is given knowledge, is given in reality much goodness." Again, he was often heard to say: "The pen is mightier than the sword and a drop of ink from the writer's quill is more sacred than the blood trickling from the wounds of a martyr." Inspired by such lofty ideals, the camel drivers of Arabia turned into

pioneers in civilization and culture, builders of wonderful public works, organizers of marvellous institutions, founders of great many sciences and arts, and above all, Godly men. The Arabic letters, the decimal system, trigonometry, medicine, chemistry, botany, minerology, geography, zoology, philosophy, poetry, architecture, paper industry, optics, the art of the goldsmith, embroidery, mosaic, and so on, all owe much to the benevolent influence of Islam on the culture and civilization of the West.

In short, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of God be on him) wrought a marvellous change among his followers and raised them to the highest point of intellectual, moral and spiritual progress. The Promised Messiah and Mahdi, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, gives a vivid description of this unparralled transformation as follows:

“The acceptance of Islam illuminated their hearts and changed their lives into virtue and their wickedness into genius. Their nightly carousels were abandoned for the sake of vigils and prayers, and their morning bouts were changed to acts of praise and thanksgiving. ... Any one who would carefully ponder over this remarkable change, how those wild Arabs abandoned their former pastures and hewed through the forests of their passions and desires to make their way to their Lord, cannot fail to conclude that it was all due to the sanctifying power of Muhammad, the Supreme Prophet elected by God for His everlasting grace. And one may well wonder at the uniqueness of his power which picked up the Holy companions from the depth of the earth and led them to the stage of the elect. He found them like beasts, devoid of the notions of divine unity and piety, who knew not the difference between virtue and vice. He taught them the rules of human propriety and explained to them the principles of communal and social life, instructed them in the laws of hygiene, in the rules of

marital relations and domestic economy, in the principles of diet and dress, of sanitation, treatment and prevention of disease, and in general inculcated lessons of moderation in all matters. And when they had mastered the rules of physical life, he led them on from physical to moral and spiritual qualities and to lessons in principled conduct so as to enable them to develop a spiritual life. And, after they had been confirmed in morals and versed in the practice of good conduct, he invited them to the heights of the nearness of God and union with Him and initiated them into the divine mysteries, and directed them to the Supreme Lord of power and majesty, so that they might henceforth freely crop the green verdure of love in the holy precincts of God and enjoy the privilege of His approval and acceptance." (Najmul Huda—The Lode Star).

DID JESUS REALLY DIE ON THE CROSS?

(A Topical Question Engaging Christianity)

By

Sheikh Nasir Ahmad, Zurich, Switzerland

The bedrock of Christian faith is doubtlessly the doctrine of atonement which in turn is based on the alleged death of Jesus Christ on the Cross. Any serious doubts about Jesus having actually died on the Cross are destined to deal a fatal blow to the Christian dogma – but not to the teachings of Christ.

For centuries, the disappearance of Jesus Christ from this world, wrapped in a cloud of mysteries, has been the subject for speculations. It can be said in a nutshell that nobody seemed to know for sure how, when and where Jesus died. Traditions of Christians, Jews and Muslims abounded in conjecture. The question turned, as a matter of fact, from the death of Jesus to the life of Jesus.

Until the end of the 19th century, both Christians and Muslims entertained the view that Jesus was somehow or other still alive and that he would visit the world once again at an appointed time. At that time the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, proclaimed that Jesus had died as a human being and was not alive. The announcement which was made on the basis of the divine revelations received by Hazrat Ahmad posed a series of questions: What were the circumstances which led to the rescue of Jesus from the Cross? Where did he die and when? Where was he buried?

In 1899 Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad made it public that facts had come to light which proved that Jesus' death did not occur on the Cross or as a result of his being put on the Cross and also that he did not travel to the heavens. He was alive when he was removed from the Cross. Then he was tended by his followers for some time who used a special

ointment to heal his wounds. When his recovery was complete, he set upon a long journey which took him to Afghanistan via Nisibin from where he came to the Indian province of the Punjab. Later he settled in Kashmir where he died a natural death at a very ripe age. It is there that his tomb, too, has been found in the Khanyar district of the capital town of Srinagar.

Now this announcement was of immense import with far-reaching consequences for the theological thinking of Christendom. If this statement of Hazrat Ahmad can be proved by historical, circumstantial and theological (Biblical) evidence, then a huge vacuum will arise in the articles of faith of the Christians who have been believing in crucifixion and in the atonement dogma.

NEW RESEARCH

Modern research and discoveries support the statement of Hazrat Ahmad and are bound to cause a sensational stir in the religious world because one of the biggest errors in the doctrines of Christianity is being uncovered.

Oxford University Press

In 1911 the Oxford University Press published the Greek texts of the Gospels which had been found in the Sinai desert during the second half of the 19th century. None of the four Gospels contained a hint about the alleged journey of Jesus to the heavens.

The Holy Shroud

The strongest proof which conclusively shows that Jesus was taken from the Cross alive is supplied by the Holy Shroud, a piece of linen about 4 metres long and over 1 metre wide. Jesus was wrapped in it after being removed from the Cross. This historic piece of cloth was kept in Constantinople from the year 438 to 1200. Then it was brought to France where it remained for 250 years. It was in Savoy till 1452 and was brought to Turin in 1572.

A special chapel was erected in Turin for the Shroud in 1664. Research work on the Shroud started in 1898. Jesus had been washed and bathed after having been taken from the Cross. Through this process all the impressions of the body of Jesus were imprinted on the cloth. The impregnation with aloe had the effect of turning the entire Shroud into a negative plate which preserved for the progeny useful hints and valuable details of the condition of the "Crucified".

The negative impression is so complete and true that scientists are astonished at its quality and wonder how the impressions could have been so clear. Blood is vividly being shown to flow from eight wounds onto the Shroud which sucked it off. This shows that Jesus at the time of his removal from the Cross was very much alive and his heart beating. Obviously, blood cannot flow upwards without the blood pressure.

Decades of research work on the Linen amply show that no man could have produced such a negative print of a human body. All signs of the brush and strokes of a painter are missing. Secundo Pia was an Italian lawyer. He succeeded in 1898 to take a photograph of the Shroud. On seeing the glass plate he could not believe his eyes as it showed crystal-clear outlines of a human body. With the help of modern technology more photographs have been taken since and they have been developed by making use of the same technique which helped to enlarge the photographs of Mars. They all show that the person wrapped in the Shroud was not dead but alive with his heart and blood pressure fully in action.

Many persons are inclined to call the Shroud aptly the fifth Gospel. Research continues and there is little doubt that all evidence will finally confirm only one thing: Jesus Christ did not die on the Cross.

Kurt Berna in Zurich

About the year 1957, a book was published in Germany

called "Das LINNEN", the author's name being Kurt Berna. This work recapitulated the results of the research work. According to it the 28 impressions on the Shroud prove conclusively that the Jews did not succeed in killing Jesus on the Cross. He was taken alive from the Cross as he himself had foretold. The book "Das LINNEN" calls the evidence as a "Surprise of history".

Kurt Berna's book was reviewed in the monthly magazine *Der ISLAM* which in those days was published in Zurich. In the book review it was stated:

"The discovery is not new to us Muslims who know from the Qur-an that Jesus did not die on the Cross. Particularly in our age, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam has emphatically put forth the thesis that Jesus did not die on the Cross. As our readers already know, it formed a part of the Mission of the Promised Messiah to "break the Cross", i.e. to refute the doctrine of the crucifixion of Jesus and to throw light on the life and teachings of Jesus. We see in this discovery a grand scientific work which substantiates the truth of the Promised Messiah. Even without this discovery we would never have accepted that Jesus died on the Cross. But this discovery adds scientific weight to the announcement of the Promised Messiah. There are still many more things to follow which will finally proclaim to the Christendom that a lot of other teachings of the Church, too, cannot be regarded to be identical with the teachings of Jesus. It appears that the Shroud was preserved through remarkable events; it was once even saved from burning." (*Der ISLAM*, No. 95, August 1957.)

It must have been this passage in the book review which made Herr Kurt Berna to think of contacting the author of this article and the editor of the magazine in 1957. He travelled from Stuttgart, Germany, to visit me in Zurich on 17th August, 1957. An identity of opinions was established even though for different reasons. The Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam believed on the basis of the statements of its

Founder that Jesus was taken alive from the Cross, and Kurt Berna had come to the same conclusion on scientific grounds. Both were interested in propagating that Jesus had not died on the Cross. Could we work together on a common basis? This question remained, however, unresolved during our talk about 21 years ago.

Remarkable Things

It is noteworthy that the impression on the Shroud confirms some details about the person of Jesus Christ as they are mentioned in the Holy Qur-an and in the sayings of the Prophet Mohammad. As for example, the fact that Jesus was about 163 centimetres tall, was wide-breasted, the color of his skin was reddish, curly hair, age about 40 years (at the time of the event of crucifixion).

The research on the Shroud not only deals a shattering blow to the popular Christian belief in the death on the Cross, it also shows the lie of his adversaries who claimed to have killed Jesus in a way which according to the tradition was reserved for the cursed ones. The new knowledge supplied by the Shroud is thus a challenge to both the followers as well as the enemies of Jesus.

How it was possible to reproduce a perfect impression of a human body on a piece of cloth, scientists may not be of the same opinion on this point. Fact is that a combination of several factors, such as: the treatment of the cloth with chemicals to heal wounds, the passing of urine which the patient had to do often (acid) and the environmental conditions surrounding the body - all contributed to produce the necessary chemical actions.

Psalms of the Gospels

An important discovery was made in 1908. Some writings were found in the ruins of Nisibin and Odessa which contained poems used by the early Christians during their

prayers. For 1500 years no trace was to be found of these poems, but a copy in the Siryani language was found in 1908. Most of these poems are the sayings of Jesus himself, addressing the world to the effect:

God saved me from death while I was in a condition very similar to death, and people thought that I was dead. But in reality I was alive. Then I migrated to the tribes of the House of Israel who accepted my message on the mountains. God has brought me to a country which resembles Paradise."

In all there are 42 such odes. This, too, confirms the description of the events after Jesus was put on the Cross, as the Quran says:

"We made the son of Mary and his mother a Sign, and gave them refuge on an elevated Land of green valley and springs of running water." (23: 51)

Discovery in Egypt

The world experienced a further discovery in 1945. Egyptian farmers were busy gathering manure for their soil and in the process they hit an old tomb which contained a vessel. The contents of this vessel were about 52 various writings on 1191 pages. These writings had been in the possession of the Copts (native Egyptian Christians of Jacobite sect of Monophysites). Among others, these writings contain 114 sayings of Jesus Christ called the "Gospel of Thomas". Another writing is called the "Gospel of Philips", whereas a third is known as the "Secret narratives of Jacob". Here are some quotations:

"Those who claim that Jesus first died and was then raised, they are wrong. Truth is that he rose up and then died later." (15: 104) In the Narratives of

In the narrative of Jacob we read:

"Jesus travelled after the crucifixion for 550 days in

“Jesus travelled after the crucifixion for 550 days in the company of his disciples”.

When Jesus wished to say farewell to his disciples and appointed Jacob to be his deputy, they asked him, according to the “Gospel of Thomas”:

“We know that you are going to leave us and go to a far-off country, but who will take care of us in your absence? Jesus answered: Jacob. Turn to him.”

The Gospel relates:

“Three women (all called Mary) accompanied Jesus at the same time on his travels: Mary, the mother of Jesus, Mary, a relation, and Mary Magdalene. The last one is also regarded to be his wife.”

Further we have:

“One Mary was his sister (meant is a remote relation), the second Mary was his mother and the third was his wife” (“Gospel of Philips” by Wilson, page 97)

This Gospel starts with the sentence: “These are the life-giving sayings of the living Jesus.”

The Discovery of Qumran

Two years after the discovery by the Egyptian farmers, the buried treasures in the depths of the Qumran valley began to come to the daylight. There are 25 poems of the Master, the contents of which are very similar to those of the other such writings. One of the poems in the scrolls found at Qumran says:

“My God, Thou hast saved my life in that Thou hast delivered me from the claws of the ill-doers. When I lay in a state of deep unconsciousness, Thou strengthened my heart and gavest my sinking soul new strength and new support.”

It is clear that the writings found by the Egyptian Fellahin in 1945 and those found at Qumran two years later, convey the same message. It is known that Jesus had received, before the crucifixion, an invitation from the ruler of

of Odessa and Nisibin in view of the persecutions he had been suffering at the hands of the Jews. The ruler had asked him to leave the Roman Empire and come to his small country where he would be given refuge. It happened that Jesus accepted this invitation after they had tried to kill him on the Cross and travelled to Nisibin along with his mother and some other companions. It is related that the successor of the ruler of Odessa accepted Christianity in the second century. A number of Bani Israel were living in Odessa. A huge cathedral was built there and the area became known as the "Oasis of Christianity".

Sir Arnold Toynbee

Crucible of Christianity is the title of a grand work written by the well-known historian of our time, Sir Arnold Toynbee. He has quoted evidence to show that in the second century the Church of Odessa produced very valuable literature. The same Church has also collected the 42 odes of the early Christians of the first century.

A "Time-Bomb"

This documentary evidence from Nisibin and Odessa appeared of such importance to the Founder of the Ahmad-iyya Movement in Islam that he planned to dispatch a delegation comprising three persons to do more research work in Nisibin. For some reasons this plan could not be realized. In any case the announcement of the Promised Messiah towards the end of the last century to the effect that Jesus did not die on the Cross and that soon irrefutable evidence would support this view — was a sort of a time-bomb for the religious world. And now the final count-down seems to be starting. Even Western scholars have been writing that the early Christians thought that Jesus had lived to an old age.

Evidence of Bhosh Pran

Following is a writing which had long been in the

possession of the rulers of Kashmir. We read:

The Northwestern India is full of Bani Israel. Jesus Christ, too, arrived here. A ruler of the Saka tribe had met Jesus when he went to the Himala Desh and saw there the Messenger of God, clad in white robes, and spoke to him. Jesus told him that he had suffered a lot of persecutions at the hands of his people; he taught only love, truthfulness and purity of heart. His name was Jesus Christ. This happened in the 78th year of the Christian era.

Another writing has been discovered in Kashmir. It is in Sharwa, one of the languages spoken in Kashmir. In a manuscript it is written:

Jesus Christ came to Kashmir and learned a few things from the pious persons of the area.

A booklet, written with the help of an archeologist, was published under the title, *Mysteries of Kashmir*. It speaks of an old hand-written copy about the old history of Kashmir which reports:

Jos-Asef is the same as Jesus, the Prophet for Bani Israel. Writings about his person were hung on the "Takht-e-Sulaiman" — the mountain. He lies buried in the tomb known as the tomb of Jos-Asef.

The Mount of Solomon

The *Takht-e-Sulaiman* (the Throne of Solomon) is of great significance in the history of Kashmir. At this place Jesus Christ and his disciples used to pray. All divinely scholars who visited Kashmir used to go there and spend a lot of time on the hillock.

A rare copy of a history book on Kashmir, written by Badi-uddin, can be seen in the British Museum London. It says:

People in Kashmir relate that there is a tomb of a disciple of Jesus in the building above the "Takht-e-Sulaiman".

We find a reference to this in the *Hindu History of Kashmir* by H.H. Wilson (page 28).

Possibly the name of this disciple is Sulaiman who was a construction expert and who also built the "Takht-e-Sulaiman". The 450 metres high hill has been named after him as "Takht-e-Sulaiman".

The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement In Islam

The Founder's book *Jesus in India* contains a sketch of the route of Jesus' journey. Jesus entered Afghanistan from the direction of Persia, thereby passing Herat. (Herat is an area which is known to have been the center of Bani Israel.) Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad wrote:

Jesus Christ, (may peace of God be upon him), arrived in Nisibin in the course of his travels, a place about 900 kilometres from Jerusalem. The Eastern border of Persia touches the Afghani town of Herat, as it is situated in the West of Afghanistan bordering with Persia. The distance between Herat and the Khyber Pass is about 800 kilometres. Jesus undertook this journey for the purpose of meeting the Bani Israel who had been driven to the land of Sidia by King Salamansar. (page 77)

There is a temple on the Mount Solomon with the following inscription on its entrance in the Persian language:

At the time (of the erection of this temple) Jos-Asef claimed to be a Prophet... Here was Jesus, the Prophet for the House of Israel.

The Afghan people are migrants from Syria. Another discovery shows that Jesus had also come to Herat. The Christians in Herat have a Bible. They believe that Jesus escaped the death on the Cross and then travelled in the direction of the East. They hold him as the Messiah of Nazareth of Kashmir. They also regard Jos-Asef as the second name of Jesus.

A Relevant Question

The skeptics always meet the claim about the escape of Jesus from death on the Cross with a question: If this is true, then Jesus must have spent about 80 years of his life in the East. But we do not find any traces of his followers in that region. How do you explain this?

The answer is simple. The ten tribes of Israel were actually lost. They were assimilated in the other nations of the East in such a way that their entity was lost without a trace. Yet there are signs to show that the area of Kashmir has been the central-point where we do get some traces of the lost ten tribes of Israel. We also find signs of their spiritual leader Jesus Christ who was, however, known there by a slightly changed name.

The Book of *Isaiah* states regarding the Messiah of the Jews that his life would be saved and that he would have a long life and see his children and the children of their children. He would be cut off from the civilized world. In *Sahifa-e-Ghuroos* we have more details which say that the coming Messiah would at last find the ten lost tribes after which he and the tribes would vanish in a way that no one would know where they went. That would be till the second advent of Jesus, which means the appearance of the Promised Messiah in Islam. So we read in *Ghuroos*:

No one on earth would be able to see or recognise them, till the day of his (second) advent. (No. IV, chapter 13, page 35)

How surprising! The prophecy seems to be heading towards its fulfilment in our days, i.e. at the time of the Second Advent of Jesus Christ in the person of the Promised Messiah in Islam. Today the traces which had vanished hitherto are surging up again, constituting the truth about the crucifixion of Jesus. The Old Testament and other scriptures of Bani Israel contain prophecies about the Messiah which can be summarized as follows:

The coming Messiah shall be prosecuted and a case shall

be brought up against him. He shall be condemned to death. Eventually his life shall be saved. He shall go in search of the lost tribes of the House of Israel who will be dispersed on the hillocks and mountains of the world (Ezekiel 34). He shall finally reach those tribes (Psams 68). His last resort shall be a high mountain with pastureland and springs (Psalms 68: 18, 23:2). Then he and his followers shall be forgotten and the world will know nothing of his mission (Ghuroos Ch. 13).

In the Latter Days the other side of the picture will come in view and the world shall know the truth about the life and death of Jesus.

Jesus in India

We have already mentioned the book *Jesus in India* written by the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. He stated:

God had decreed from the very beginning that this shining weapon and this truth-revealing argument which destroys the belief about death on the Cross should be explained to the world by the Promised Messiah. For the Holy Prophet had foretold that the Faith of the Cross shall not decline nor shall its progress be arrested until the Promised Messiah appears in the world. It was the Promised Messiah at whose hands was to be brought about the "Breaking of the Cross". The hint in the prophecy was that at the time of the Promised Messiah God would bring about circumstances which would lay bare the truth about the crucifixion. Then would come the end, and the Creed of the Cross would complete its span of life, not, however, through war or violence, but merely through heavenly agencies which would manifest themselves in the world in the form of knowledge and logical deduction... It was inevitable, therefore, that the heavens should not have disclosed these proofs and these conclusive pieces of evidence until the time of the appearance of the Promised Messiah. And so did it come

to pass. (Pages 72, 73)

The Promised Messiah wrote in his Arabic book *Al-Huda*:

Should the tomb of Jesus be opened up, it is very likely that some inscriptions would come to light and deep mysteries would be solved. We pray for it. May God make it possible and may the roots of the Unbelievers be cut off.

Further we read in his book *Taryaqul Quloob*:

A veritable miracle granted to me lies in the fact I have proved with clear, tangible proofs the death of Jesus Christ — may peace and blessings of God be upon him. I have also been able to name the place of his death and pin-point his tomb. (Page 145)

That is the grand triumph which was meant by the prophecy about the "Breaking of the Cross". (Page 245)

Two Conferences

This vital subject has been the topic for discussion of several conferences this year. One such conference was held in May in Turin, Italy, in which many Christian scholars endeavored to further unfold the mysteries of the Holy Shroud. The other conference was held by the Ahmadiyya Muslims during the month of June in London. The research papers presented in these gatherings will, undoubtedly, make valuable contribution towards a better understanding of the recent discoveries.

CURRENT TOPICS AND TRENDS

Writings From The Time Of Jesus

In the past, the primary sources of the Christian faith have been generally limited to the Old Testament and the New Testament. Most Biblical scholars consider that the Old Testament covers the period up to 165 B.C., while the New Testament starts from 50 A.D. In between these two dates are two centuries of the period in which Jesus appeared. Up to recent times, any writings determined to have been produced in this period were rejected by the believing Christian scholars as *Pseudepigrapha*, meaning false writings.

The *New York Times* (Feb. 4, 1978), however, reports that interest in the writings of this period has been steadily gaining serious attention by the scholars. One such project is being led by Dr. James Charlesworth of Duke University, whose organization has been searching for documents of this period all over Europe. Once the initial research is completed, according to Dr. Charlesworth, "the next job would be the theology. I'd like to write a book in around six or eight years on what Christ's Bible was like. He was obviously familiar with parts of the Old Testament, but what else did he read?"

One of the early conclusions from these writings is certainly significant. Dr. Charlesworth contends that these writings indicate that Jews around the time of Jesus were not bound to a monolithic, orthodox religion, but were part of a diverse, evolving culture. This impression of Judaism at the time of Jesus is obviously in sharp contrast with the teachings of the prophet Moses on the absolute Unity of God. One can only draw the conclusion that the mission of Jesus was divinely ordained at a time when the Jews had forgotten or abandoned strict adherence to the teachings of Moses. As Jesus has been quoted in the Bible to have come for the fulfillment of the Law of Moses, his mission was therefore clearly directed toward a revival and regeneration of the

teachings of Moses. It could not be his intention to found a new faith if the conclusions drawn by Dr. Charlesworth are correct.

If this research project, undertaken by Dr. Charlesworth and his associates, continues to strengthen the premises formed at this stage, it is bound to have a long range and vital impact upon both Judaism and Christianity. Any movement toward the fulfillment of the Law of Moses cannot be logically rejected by the Jews. Consequently, no Christian can convincingly claim that Lord Jesus was the bearer of a new law or the founder of a new faith. The world will be watching the completion of Dr. Charlesworth's project with keen interest.

The Future Of Judaism

Many Jewish thinkers have expressed great expectations in the last three decades concerning the revitalization of Judaism inspired by the creation of the state of Israel. Alas! The trend seems to be just in the opposite direction. As *Time Magazine* (March 20, 1978) reports, Rabbi Alvin J. Reines of Cincinnati has concluded that the American Jewry is "in a desperate state of crisis." He is convinced that by year 2100 the American Jewish community could dwindle from today's 5.8 million to fewer than one million.

Rabbi Reines further concludes that modern American Jews simply do not accept the teachings of traditional Judaism. Even Reformed Judaism, in his opinion, is only a half-hearted effort at liberalism.

What could be the root of this ominous development in the future of Judaism? As Rabbi Reines observes, many Jews no longer believe in a personal, benevolent Deity who revealed himself to Moses. In other words, the basis belief in the almighty seems to be tragically weakening if not completely vanishing. To substitute the word God, such terms as "the power of creation," or "the flow and force of life" are gaining popularity among the Reformed Jews. No more is

there the traditional strong adherence to the Ten Commandment. In fact, as Rabbi Reines notes, many Jews are now turning to either Unitarianism or Ethical Culture.

The result, therefore, is the introduction of Polydoxy, which is a radically open-ended faith. As *Time* observes, it has only one absolute: that there are no absolutes. It is interesting to note that this movement is spreading rapidly among the Jews, both in the United States as well as overseas. In the words attributed to Rabbi Anthony Holz, "Fifty percent of what we know is wrong, and we can never know which fifty percent."

It is indeed a sad and tragic commentary upon the fate of a religion whose origins go back to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and other great advocates in the Oneness of God. Let us hope that the trend will start to reverse, and belief in the uncompromising unity of One, Perfect and Eternal Almighty God will be strongly established in the hearts of the Jews, Christians, and indeed the entire mankind.

Jewish Scholars and Historical Jesus

If we follow the historical logic of the relationship of Jesus and Judaism, the latter is bound to reject him. In fact, in the past centuries, even the mention of the name of Jesus was almost a heresy in the Jewish literature.

We are happy to learn from a recent article by Kenneth A. Briggs (*New York Times*, Feb. 2, 1978) that some Jewish scholars have recently started to reclaim Jesus "as an exemplary, deeply religious Jew deserving of a high place in Jewish history." This new perspective is encouraging since it conforms with the truth. According to Muslim belief, the mission of Jesus, who was born among the Jews, was a revival of the faith as given by the earlier prophets of Israel. He came to purify the teachings of Moses and not to alter them. He came to fulfill the law and not to change it. In fact, in his own words, his divine mission was to the lost tribes of the house of Israel. As Dr. Pinchas Lapid, an Israeli religious scholar

observes, "we Jews are very proud of our Einsteins, Heinrich Heines, and Sigmund Freuds. We ought to be much prouder of Jesus." Further he observes: "Jesus was as faithful to the law as I would hope to be. I even suspect that Jesus was more faithful to the law than I am -- and I am an Orthodox Jew."

This ecumenical movement between the Jews and Christians is most welcome to the world of Islam. If the two religions can unite in the acceptance of Jesus as a messenger of God, one can certainly hope that it may lead toward a much wider and more enduring unity of all semitic faiths. According to the Muslim belief, both Moses and Jesus prophesied the coming of Muhammad as culminator of religious law, one who would be the Comforter, one who would lead to the whole truth. According to the Old Testament, Muhammad's advent was the manifestation of the Almighty, destined to take place near Mr. Paran at Mecca. We wish the assessment of the historical Jesus by modern Christian scholars great success.

New Challenges To The Divinity Of Jesus

The *Muslim Sunrise* of July 1977 carried a *UPI* story reported by *Burlington County Times* in its issue of June 29, 1977, that seven prominent British protestant theologians had started to challenge the divinity of Jesus Christ. They contended that Jesus never claimed to be the Son of God, only pagan and other influences on early Christians promoted him to that status.

The doubts about the divinity of Jesus seem to be now spreading among Roman Catholic theologians also. For the last 15 centuries, the orthodox Catholic faith has been based upon a belief in Jesus Christ as a "true God and true man." In recent times, however, many Catholic theologians in various countries have sharply challenged this doctrine, the very backbone of orthodox Catholic theology. One outstanding scholar among these is Hans Kung of the University of

Tubingen, Germany. He has been challenging the Catholic Church to have a new look at the whole issue of the divinity of Jesus and come up with a realistic concept. In 1974, Professor Kung published a book entitled *Christ Sein*. An English version of this was published by Doubleday in 1976, under the title *On Being A Christian*.

Tracing the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus from the period of early ecumenical councils, Professor Kung tells us that these councils proclaimed that Jesus was really a man. However, they also asserted that he was the Son of God. Coming down from times of the Nicene Creed formulated in 381 A.D. to the Council of Chalcedon (451 A.D.), the doctrine continued to be revised and refined further. Professor Kung argues that this dogma, as defined by early councils, must be transferred to the mental climate of our own time. He has recently published another book with the title *Um Nichts Als Die Wahrheit* (Nothing But The Truth). He explains that Jesus did not proclaim himself as the eternal Son of God, nor did the early Christians. In any case, he further argues that the ancient dogmas were heavily influenced by Greek concepts of man and nature which are now outdated.

While the dispute over the divinity of Jesus may be of somewhat recent origin among the Catholics, the Protestant scholars have been raising their doubts for more than a century. Among Roman Catholic thinkers, perhaps earlier expressions of the changing concepts can be traced to 1966 when Ansfried Hulsboch issued his critique against the Council of Chalcedon. As *Time* (Feb. 27, 1978) reports, Hulsbosch wrote that the Church should no longer speak of a union of divine and human nature in one pre-existent person. The two-nature concept was later repudiated by Jesuit Schoonberg, who discusses God's presence in the human person of Jesus Christ rather than his own divinity. Canadian theologian Lonergan is reported by *Time* to have said that Schoonberg's book could only lead to the logical conclusion

that Jesus was "a man and only a man."

In this regard, the comments of Professor Pohier of Institut Catholique in Paris go even further. According to *Time*, he says that "at the limit, it is an absurdity to say that God makes Himself into man. God cannot be anything other than God." Additional comments have been made by other outstanding Catholic scholars in other countries. One may look forward to a book written by theologian Sobrine to be published by Maryknoll Fathers' Orbis Books under the title of "Christology at Crossroads."

It seems as if modern Christian theology is undergoing a sweeping and fundamental change. One wonders that once Jesus is accepted as only a man and spiritual guide, how little distance will be left between modern Christianity and Islam. Let us hope that the truth will prevail and the world will finally unite under one, uniform, spiritual banner.

BOOK REVIEWS

Berna, Kurt. *Christ Did Not Perish On The Cross: Christ's Body Buried Alive*. Hicksville, New York. 1975. Exposition Press, Inc.

There has been a growing interest in the last few decades in the question of the crucifixion of Jesus. More and more scholars in the western world have been expressing their doubts about the traditional Christian concept of the Crucifixion and physical Resurrection of Jesus. This book is a valuable contribution to the subject. It is an investigation into the medical circumstances surrounding the events of the Crucifixion. The author, who was nominated President of the International Foundation for the Holy Shroud in 1964, offers the evidence that the heart of Jesus was still beating several minutes after he was taken down from the cross.

Professor Berna's argument is mainly based upon the new and rather startling facts about the Holy Shroud enshrined in Turin, Italy. As the legend indicates, Jesus was wrapped in a shroud after he was taken down from the cross. It is believed that this Shroud came to the Byzantium after the fall of the Roman Empire, and was worshipped by believers for more than 700 years. In 1204, it was brought by crusaders to France, and finally in 1572, it came to Turin where to this day it is displayed every 33 years.

Perhaps the new evidence would never have found the light of day had it not been for the Italian photographer, Guiseppe Enrie, who was commissioned by the Catholic Church to photograph the Shroud. To Enrie's great astonishment, the film when developed, clearly showed the features of a man's face and a human body. This book leads us into the technical and scientific aspects of this negative imprint of the body of Jesus on the Shroud. The author argues that the print was made on the Shroud because of blood flowing from the wounds of Jesus. In other words, Jesus did not die – in

the clinical sense -- on the cross. And when he rose, it was obviously in flesh and bones with earthly blood.

The author offers both inductive and deductive evidence to support his rather convincing thesis. Obviously, it is not very easy for those who believe in the traditional concept of the Crucifixion to accept Berna's thesis. For, if he is right, then the entire Christian dogma of the Resurrection and Atonement disintegrates. It is hoped that the forthcoming conferences in the summer of 1978, one in Turin, Italy, and the other at the London Mosque in England, will furnish additional information on this highly interesting subject. Professor Berna's book is fascinating reading for all who are interested in the episode of the Crucifixion of Lord Jesus. One can only add, however, that his thesis, although full of new and substantial scientific evidence, is not altogether original. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, wrote extensively on the subject that Jesus did not die on the cross. The present author, nevertheless, must be given all of the credit for his contribution in regard to the evidence provided by the Holy Shroud.

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Faber-Kaiser, A. *Jesus Died In Kashmir*. London, England. 1977. Gordon & Cremonesi, Inc.

This book seems to be a proper and befitting sequel to the Berna book reviewed earlier. In a way, it takes off from where the other book ends. The former book expounds the argument that Jesus was taken off the cross still alive. This book offers a highly interesting story as to what happened to Jesus once the wounds on his hands and feet were healed. It traces his historical travel from the cross to Kashmir, in the company of his mother Mary and his disciple, St. Thomas. The author surveys the books that testify to the eastward travels of the ten lost tribes of Israel towards Afghanistan and Kashmir. He brings to light interesting linguistic parallels

between names occurring in Kashmir and the Israeli names found in the Bible. He is convinced that the early years of Lord Jesus between his birth and the age of 12, and also between ages 13 and 29, about which the Bible is completely silent, might as well have been spent in traveling in the same direction.

Finally, he comes to the conclusion that while Mary died on the way to Kashmir and was buried in Pakistan, Jesus survived her for many years. He lived in Kashmir, was married, had children, and died at a very mature age in the capital town of Srinagar. The author offers testimony that he was buried in the Khanyar district of the town where his tomb can still be seen. Faber-Kaiser refers to many ancient Buddhist writings and other rare documents to further expound his thesis. He seems convinced that Moses too might have come to Kashmir and could have been buried in a tomb not too far from Srinagar. Indeed, one finds many places in Kashmir that have borne the name of Moses over the centuries.

In Chapter 7, the author gives credit to the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement to have first brought the existence of the tomb of Jesus to the attention of the world. He gives a list of the Ahmadiyya centers from where additional information is available. Unfortunately, this list is very incomplete. For example, it does not mention such active Ahmadiyya centers like the Fazl Mosque in Washington, D.C., and the London Mosque in Putney, England, from where several books have been published on the subject. Mr. A. Faber-Kaiser has painstakingly collected valuable material by going to Kashmir himself to investigate. He has certainly put together an impressive dossier which may answer many questions perplexing the scholars over the centuries.

AHMADIYYA MUSLIM MISSIONS

AFRICA

- GHANA:** P.O. Box 39, Salt Pond
GAMBIA: P.O. Box 6, Banjul
IVORY COAST: P. O. Box 3416,
Adjame, Abidjan.
KENYA: P.O. Box 40554, Nairobi.
LIBERIA: P.O. Box 618, Monrovia.
MAURITIUS: P.O. Box 6, Rose Hill.
NIGERIA: P.O. Box 418, Lagos.
SIERRA LEONE: P.O.Box 11, Bo.
P. O. Box 353, Freetown.
SOUTH AFRICA: Mr. M.G.Ibrahim,
P.O. Box 4195, Capetown.
TANZANIA: P.O. Box 376,
Daressalam.
UGANDA: P.O. Box 343, Kampala.

AMERICA

- CANADA:** 163 Belsize Drive,
Toronto, Ontario.
GUYANA: Lot No. 1, Lamaha &
Albert Street, Georgetown.
TRINIDAD: Mr. Hanif Yacoob,
Upper Caripichaima,
Calcutta Settlement.
U.S.A.: 2141 Leroy Pl., N.W.
Washington, DC 20008.
637 Randolph Street,
Dayton, Ohio 45408.
1064 Union Street,
Brooklyn, N.Y., 11225.
Pomeroy Road, P.O. Box 338,
Athens, Ohio 45701.
2522 Webster Avenue,
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15219
4448 S. Wabash Avenue,
Chicago, Ill. 60615.

ASIA

- CEYLON:** 99 Driebergs Avenue,
Colombo 10.
FIJI: P.O. Box 3758,
Samabula—Suva.
INDIA: Qadian, Distt: Gurdaspur,
Panjab.
INDONESIA: Djl, Balikpapan 1/10,
Djakarta 1/13.
PHILIPPINES: Haji Muhammad
Ebbah, Simunal, Bongao, Sulu.
SINGAPORE: 111 Onan Road,
Singapore 15.

EUROPE

- DENMARK:** Eriksminde Alle 2,
Hvidovre - Copenhagen.
UNITED KINGDOM: 16 Gressenhall
Road, London, S.W. 18.
152 Nithsdale Road, -
Glasgow, S.1.
GERMANY: Die Moschee, Wieck-
strasse, 24 Hamburg, Stellingen.
Die Moschee, Babenhauser,
Landstrasse 25, Frankfort.
HOLLAND: De Moschee, Oostduinlaan
79, Den Haag.
SPAIN: Mission Ahmadia del Islam,
Colonia San Nicolas 19,
Madrid 21.
SWEDEN: Islams Ahmadiyya Mission,
All Manna Vagen 21, 41460
Goteborg, Sverige,
SWITZERLAND: 323 Forchstrasse,
8008, Zurich.